Gather

Crush the Rush: *Thrive*

Survive This Holiday Season
Are You Feeling the Rush?

It's that time of year again! You're so busy following up with leads that you can hardly remember if you ate lunch. In the back of your mind, you're dreaming of a vacation somewhere winter doesn't touch and cell service is nonexistent. **It's not you; it's the holidays. Don't despair – prepare.**
3 Steps to **Thriving** During the Holiday Event Season

1. Automate Your Busy Work

**Update Your Documents:** Check through the PDFs you regularly send like event proposals, event contracts, and even holiday menus. Work with your team to get them updated and save the final versions in a folder that can be easily accessed. Since you’re sending these regularly, you want to make sure they’re on-brand and easy to find and attach without having to read through them each time.

**Create Templates for Faster Responses:**
Shorten your response time with quick and easy standard responses that you can personalize to your inquiry or guest. Some ideas to get started:

- Your initial response to a lead – both an available & unavailable message
- Proposal and Payment requests
- Booking confirmation email
- Pre-event reminders
- Post-event thank you

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64% of customers expect you to respond & interact with them in real-time.

*Salesforce*
Set up an Auto-Responder: While you’re busy with your to-do list, setting up an auto-responder can help lighten the load. Guests will get the initial response they’re looking for and you can set reasonable expectations on when they will hear back from you. You can even include some of the basics like your prices and menus so that by the time you get back, they’re ready to book.

**Pro Tip:**

Update your email footer!

Make it themed around the holiday and make sure you have the latest contact information.
2. Get Your Team on the Same Page

**Organize Your Calendar:** A shared, digital calendar is a must for organizing your events and availability. Check the settings to make sure that everyone from the hostess to the head chef to the owner has viewing access. That way, you can record what’s booked when and your team is empowered to find the information themselves.

**Be Proactive about Team Communication:** The next piece you need is a way to communicate with your team – especially about last-minute details or changes. Work with your team to decide what that is, whether it’s email, text, or a chat software. Ideally, you want to agree to one – there should be a single source of truth that everyone can keep an eye on.

**Batch Your Printing and Downloading:** Set aside time each week to download the BEO’s for your upcoming events so you can print and distribute them all at once. By going through everything at once, you’ll be able to check that you have what you need and make any last-minute updates before handing them off.
3. Set Future-You Up for Success

**Track All Your Leads:** Yes, all of them — even the ones that don’t end up working out. These are invaluable once you start the new year. The holidays can drive new leads to your business, and even if they don’t end up booking with you, you now have an audience for future marketing. You’ll be able to let them know about your offerings year-round and use the list to run campaigns to fill your space.

**(Passively) Source New Leads:** While you may not have the time to proactively source new leads, make sure you have a lead form on your site and callouts on social media that give future guests a way to request your services. It’s also helpful to be present on a variety of event marketplaces like Eventup, Yelp or Kapow. These sites bring leads to you with minimal effort on your end.

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**It’s Time to Crush It!**

You could be doing all these best practices year-round with an event management platform, saving you time and headache. Once you get through the rush, add "find a partner who can power my growth" to your to-do list.

**Gather** is an easy-to-use platform that lets you focus on the big picture while handling all the little details. And it keeps everyone in sync along the way – from your guests to your team. With a partner to help with everything from marketing and sourcing leads to staying organized and tracking success, you’ll start your next busy season ready to thrive (not just survive).